



Accessory Dwelling Units

An Accessory Dwelling Unit or ADU (sometimes called an in-law, secondary, or granny unit) can come in three configurations. Those configurations include a standalone structure detached from the primary dwelling unit (aka detached ADUs) or an addition to the primary dwelling unit (aka attached ADUs) or a conversion of the interior of the primary dwelling unit into two dwelling units (aka internal conversions). ADUs provides complete independent living facilities for one or more persons. It shall include permanent provisions for living, sleeping, cooking, and sanitation, all on the same parcel as an existing single-family dwelling. ADUs are allowed in the City of Rohnert Park with a Certificate of Zoning Compliance and Building Permit.

Planning Application & Review Process

Applicants are encouraged to speak with staff about application requirements prior to submitting the documents for the Certificate of Zoning Compliance. Upon submission, the Planning, Building, and Engineering divisions of the Development Services Department, as well as the Public Safety Department shall all review and provide comments on the proposal. Only after all comments have been adequately addressed will the Certificate of Zoning Compliance be approved. After such approval, the applicant will be able to apply for any required Building Permits. For further information regarding ADUs or other building and land use regulations, please contact City of Rohnert Park Development Services at (707) 588-2236 or visit http://www.rpcity.org/city_hall/departments/development_services.

Planning Dept. Requirements

- 1) Prior to submittal, applicants should review Municipal Code Sections 17.10.060 and 17.07.020.X.
- 2) The ADU must be architecturally compatible with the main unit, comply with the City's adopted design guidelines, and have independent exterior access.
- 3) Floor area for an attached ADU may not exceed 50% of the floor area of the main unit. Floor area for a detached ADU may not exceed 1,200 square feet (subject to Floor Area Ratio (F.A.R.) and lot coverage limitations).
- 4) One additional off-street parking space is required for ADUs (except internal conversions), however this requirement is waived if within 1/2 mile of a bus or rail stop.
- 5) An attached garage cannot be converted into an ADU.
- 6) ADUs must comply with the setback, F.A.R., and lot coverage requirements found in the Development Standards (Municipal Code Section 17.10.020). For detached ADUs the maximum height is 12 feet, the rear setback is 10 feet and the side setback is 5 feet. If the ADU is considered attached (either physically attached or sited within 5 feet of the main structure), then the development standards for the main structure shall apply.
- 7) Detached ADUs may only be built behind the front elevation of the main structure.
- 8) For an ADU not within the footprint of the existing main structure (i.e. built as an addition or as a detached structure), the property owner must file a deed restriction stating:
 - a. the ADU will not be sold separately,
 - b. the ADU is restricted to the approved size (unless separately approved), and
 - c. the main unit must remain owner-occupied.
- 9) ADUs are not considered new residential uses for the purposes of calculating connection fees or capacity charges for utilities.
- 10) Certificate of Zoning Compliance applications must be considered ministerially within 120 days of receiving a complete application.

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Building Dept. Requirements

- 1) Detached and attached ADUs require separate utility connections for water, gas, and sewer. Internal conversions may utilize the primary dwelling unit's existing utility connections for water, gas and sewer. All three ADU configurations can utilize the existing electrical service if it is sized to accommodate the primary and accessory dwelling unit. Otherwise the existing utility connect is required to be upgraded or have a second utility connection added (if allowed by the service provider).
- 2) All utility connection locations must be illustrated on the plans.
- 3) Attached ADUs or internal conversions shall maintain fire-resistant construction standards as required by the California Residential Code (CRC) Section 302.3-302.14. Detached ADUs require shall maintain fire-resistant construction standards as required by the CRC Section 302.1.
- 4) Attached ADUs or internal conversions require smoke & carbon monoxide alarms be installed in accordance with NFPA 72 and 720, for both the primary and accessory dwelling unit. Detached ADUs require smoke & carbon monoxide alarms be installed in accordance with NFPA 72 and 720, only within the ADU.
- 5) Attached ADUs or internal conversions require water-conserving plumbing fixtures be installed in accordance California State Law (Section 1101.1-1101.8 Civil Code), for both the primary and accessory dwelling unit. Detached ADUs require water-conserving plumbing fixtures be installed in accordance California State Law (Section 1101.1-1101.8 Civil Code), only within the ADU.

Engineering Dept. Requirements

- 1) When submitting for an ADU building permit, show the existing water lateral and sewer lateral route and sizes to the existing home. Also, show the proposed new water and sewer line routing to the ADU with sizing.
- 2) Detached and attached ADUs require the installation of a new water line lateral and water meter. They also require additional sewer cleanouts to be installed. During design, please review the City of Rohnert Park's water meter handout for required configuration. An encroachment permit will be required when completing this work.

Public Safety Requirements

- 1) Automatic residential fire sprinkler systems may be required if the thresholds or standards outlined the [California State Fire Marshal's Information Bulletin 17-001](#) are exceeded.

Submittal Requirements

Planning Dept. Requirements: The following items are required for a completed ADU (Certificate of Zoning Compliance) application.

Document Format: Please provide 11x17 paper copies and a digital copy (PDF or flash drive is acceptable) of the application package.

Application Form: (1 copy) Completed Zoning and Land Use Application. Property owner signatures must be included.

Plot Plan: (5 copies) Scale drawing showing site dimensions, property lines, setbacks, existing and proposed buildings or additions, parking, and driveways.

Elevations: (5 copies) Scale drawing showing all four sides of all proposed buildings, with types of materials and color schemes shown. (1 copy must be colored).

Floor Plan: (5 copies) Scale drawing showing layout of existing and proposed floor space including use of rooms.

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Building Dept. Requirements: The following items are required for a complete building permit application.

Document Format: Please provide 24x36 paper copies.

Building Plans: (7 copies) Scale drawings showing:

- General Information / Building Analysis
- Site Plan
- Architectural Plans
- Structural Plans
- Floor / Wall / Ceiling / Roof framing plans (including truss layout)
- Exterior Elevations
- Details / Specifications (architectural/structural)
- Mechanical Plans
- Electrical Plans
- Plumbing Plans

Structural Calculations: (2 copies) If applicable need to be stamped and signed by California licensed architect or registered engineer (designer). Submitted as a separate 8.5" x 11" document.

Truss Package: (2 copies) If applicable need to be stamped and signed by the designer. Submitted as a separate 8.5" x 11" document.

CALGreen Checklist: (1 copy) If applicable need to be must be printed on the plans and submitted as a separate 8.5" x 11" document. They must also be signed by designer and/or owner.

Energy Code Documentation: (1 copy) If applicable need to be must be printed on the plans and submitted as a separate 8.5" x 11" document.

Special Inspection Form: (2 copies) If applicable need to be filled out by the designer as a separate 8.5" x 11" documents. They must also be signed by designer.

Geotechnical Report: (1 copy) If applicable need to be stamped by a Geotechnical Engineer. Internal conversions do not require geotechnical reports. Attached and detached ADUs do not require geotechnical reports if under 500 sq ft and utilize the same type of foundation as the existing primary dwelling.